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# A Journey to Self

Theresa Thewes  
*Buffalo State College*

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A Journey to Self  
by

Theresa Thewes, PhD

An Abstract of a Project  
in  
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Master of Science

July 2010

Buffalo State College  
State University of New York  
Department of Creative Studies

## ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

### *A Journey to Self*

The initial intent of this project was to define a future direction by focusing on intuitive problem solving and work with a life coach. The plan exploited a tactile preference with work in fiber, glass and paint. In order to enhance skills of reflection, the plan included lessons in yoga and participation in the Expert2Expert conference and the Creative Problem Solving Institute conference. Key learnings of the project included clarification of a strong preference to embrace the present and a willingness to allow the future to unfurl. It became obvious that I also have a clear preference for tactile, creative process – as indicated by the attached wall hanging (*A Journey to Self: Divergence and Convergence*). It has also become clear that that Learning is a key passion. Finally, there is a growing importance of voice – both in explaining my introvert preference to others (including my students) and in tactile expression through work with hot glass and weaving.



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Theresa Thewes  
July 31, 2010

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State University of New York  
Department of Creative Studies

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Dates of Approval:

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Gerard J. Puccio, PhD  
Advisor  
Chair, International Center for Studies in Creativity



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Theresa Thewes, PhD  
Student

## **Dedication**

To Tom Thewes, the love of my life.  
I am deeply appreciative of his willingness to encourage my growth.

## **Acknowledgement**

This journey has been one that started at birth and will surely continue to death because of the teachers who have helped me to develop a passion for learning.

I would be shamed to omit someone of importance and so, if you know me and are reading this, please be aware that you have touched me deeply and have helped me to grow. Thank you all.

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## **Section One**

### **Background to the Project**

On August 27, 1957 Mary Czyzyk and her husband, Robert Clarence Rehm gave birth to their seventh child. The baby was christened Theresa; five siblings were born into the family after her. She was named after Saint Therese of Lisieux who saw herself as “a small wild flower ... simple and hidden, but blooming where God had planted her” ([www.littleflower.org](http://www.littleflower.org)). St. Therese teaches us to do the ordinary things with extraordinary love. She is associated with flowers and small, kind deeds.

As this child (me) grew, she often walked with her Dad – an artist who was painting hospital walls while joyfully raising his twelve children. Dad showed me the beauty of a shadow, the poetry of nature and the awe of silence. I watched him work with his paints; I learned to look through his eyes. He died in 1988, just one year after I completed a doctorate in chemistry. My mother was a full time parent until my junior year in high school when she entered college to study social work. She has retired from a federal government position and, at 87 years of age, provides sage advice to those who think to ask for it. When we ask what gift she would like, she always answers “Peace, and quiet.” She is a lover of nature and has graciously accepted the squirrel who visits her bird feeder. She is generous, loving and devout. Through her guidance, all of her children hold a deep belief in the grace of a Supreme Being.

I studied biochemistry to find out why things happen the way they do. I learned to love inquiry, science and mathematics. The study of these disciplines helped me to develop a strong logical, sequential mode of problem solving. Twenty years ago I moved to Edinboro, a beautiful college town in northwestern Pennsylvania. Colleagues in the department placed a very high priority on quality teaching and provided sage advice as I learned its art and craft. My primary teaching responsibility has been for the non-major's course. I enjoy the diversity of both the content and the students in that classroom. The years at Edinboro have been filled with a growing love of teaching and learning. I have worked on local, state, national and international initiatives to improve teacher preparation for the elementary school science classroom.

I was awarded an 'emergency' sabbatical for the 2006-07 academic year. During this time, I traveled 9000 miles by car within the state of Pennsylvania. I worked with a team of educators to train elementary school teachers in inquiry instruction. This fiftieth year became a time of great change. The year was filled with challenges; I moved from a living style of 'finding joy in every day' to one of 'making it through the day'. In September of 2007, I returned to the university classroom. My work tired and frustrated me. The following spring Dr. Michael Fox from the International Center of Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State College presented a session on Creativity at the Jim Miller Celebration of Teaching on the Edinboro University campus. I left the presentation with a brochure for the certificate and master's programs in Creative Studies. I was accepted into the June 2008 cohort (the Gr8s) of the program.

I wrote a paper on “Giftedness and Creativity in Science” for the first course in the program. I built a complex net of interlocking thoughts and got frustrated in the editing and refinement of the paper. Mary Murdock explained that I had some skill at information synthesis. Throughout the Creative Studies program I have learned to be more deliberate in these skills of synthesis. I talk, for example, of following strings of thoughts or connections. I am mindfully choosing to take time in incubation – allowing thoughts to bounce around each other. As I continued through the masters program, I learned that I have a high creative potential and that I am a strong implementer. The KAI classifies me as an Innovator; Myers-Briggs as ISFJ. My strongest preferences lie in the way I take in information. I have a strong tactile and low visual preference.

I am adept at creative problem solving. That raised a challenge in the courses of the Creative Studies program – it was difficult for me to define personal problems that needed a creative solution. Given dissatisfaction with my current job, I began to focus more and more attention on planning for a future. The proposal paper for this project centered on identification of a Passion – so that I could build a path towards it.

I have invested at least 18 months in trying to uncover what the Passion of my life might be. My analysis of it to date had included very logical steps; I made very little progress to resolution. In reflection, an intuitive mode of problem solving seemed more likely to uncover that choice. In order to tap into that intuitive aspect – and, by hunch, a spiritual aspect – I decided to exploit my tactile preference. I am enthralled by the flow and resistance of glass. I love the

way that light is fragmented by glass and color. For as long as I can remember, I have wanted to learn how glass is shaped. I decided to incorporate lessons with glass into this project.

If my hands are filled, my mind is free. I especially like soft textures and patterns. I saw a clear connection between weaving wefts and warps with synthesis of information. I decided to incorporate lessons in weaving into this project. I find it hard to be reflective. In order to uncover a Passion, it seems important to become better at reflection. I decided to add Yoga and meditation to the project. This path led to George Leonard's Integral Transformative Practice and the CPSI labyrinth.

I am an introvert with a strong preference for silence and the sound of nature. It seemed important that I move out of my introvert preference and to work with others to help uncover this Passion. I had heard enough of my thoughts on the subject – it seemed important to hear others. I opted to learn about glass and weaving with teachers. I became a regular at the Yoga class at the local YMCA. I registered for a day at the Expert2Expert conference and a week at the CPSI conference. I contracted with a Life Coach to clarify the identity of the Passion.

As an implementer I believed that I had a good plan in place to know, by the project's completion, where my Passion lies. I was confident that once identified, I could easily draw a path to it. I completed lessons in working with glass, I learned Yoga positions (although I can barely execute the Plank), I found a talent and a deep pleasure in weaving and I found that the Journey to the Passion ended up to be a Journey to Self.

Because there were unique lessons learned, portions of this report will be structured around:

- Glass
- Weaving
- Water and Painting
- Yoga, Meditation and Introspection
- Collaboration: The Wisdom of the Learned

In the proposal for this project I set a specific set of goals that I hoped to achieve by its conclusion. These goals included:

- Use strong tactile preferences to learn key skills of weaving and hot glass;
- Learn to create intuitively in these media;
- Open myself to opportunity for self reflection through yoga and meditation
- Develop skills of intuitive problem solving (to complement strong logical problem solving skills);
- Build a clear vision of a Passion that will guide a shift to a more fulfilling life's goal; to identify "Where the Universe will take me."

In the report that follows, I have detailed the literature that has been important in preparing for and achieving the tasks of the project (Section Two); explained the process that I have used to achieve these goals (Section Two); detailed the outcomes (Section Four); key learnings (Section Five); and have, in Section Six, integrated the learning into conclusions. This document ends with a series of Appendices (List of Teachers, Those who viewed the art products and the original proposal paper).

## **Section Two**

### **Pertinent Literature and Teachers**

This section of the report explains the 'ground work' and theoretical basis of the project. I had opportunity to work with numerous talented and generous teachers. My journey through previous portions of the master's program helped me to build a personal understanding of the science of creativity. As indicated in the background portion of this report, I had tremendous opportunity to build a better understanding of my personal creativity and creative problem solving skills.

### **Glass**

My education with glass was primarily hands-on. I worked with several glass artists to dabble in techniques of glass. Mr. Tom Doner led my first lesson, a torch class. This class worked with rods of glass and a torch to make pendants swirled with color and a first attempt at blown glass. Ms. Sally Scarlett is a local artist who spent time discussing the various types of hot glass and explaining the tools and techniques that she uses in fused glass work. She very generously led me through two projects. I visited the Pittsburgh Glass Center (PGC) and took two classes with their instructors. In the first class we worked in pairs to blow garden floats (glass balls that would float on a pond). This was a blown glass class that started with 2 X 4 blobs of molten glass on the end of a hollow pontil.

The second class used a pulled glass technique (starting with a similar glass blob on a solid pontil) to form glass flowers.

I am not ready to walk away from the experiences of working with glass. In the near future I will visit the Corning Museum of Glass and will attend a friend's lesson in stained glass.

### Teachers

Assorted artists. *Pittsburgh Glass Center*, Pittsburgh, PA.

Doner, Thomas. Glass Artist. *Glass Blowing Center*, Hilliards, PA.

Robertson, Wendy. Glass Artist, Edinboro, PA.

Scarlett, Sally. Glass Artist. *SCARLETT Glass*, Edinboro, PA.

### Literature

Bray, C. (2001), *Dictionary of glass: Materials and techniques* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).

Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Halem, H. (1996). *Glass Notes: A Reference for the Glass Artist* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.).

Philadelphia, PA: Franklin Mills Press.

## **Weaving**

Again, initial lessons around the loom have been hands-on. My introduction to the loom came from Ms. Tari Kerss. She taught introductory weaving at Edinboro University. She welcomed me into the classroom and explained the parts and functions of the loom and the tools associated with its use. Based on



her introduction, I was able to borrow a table top loom from the University for use this summer.

I posted a request for a weaving instructor on the Northwestern PA Spinners' and Weavers' Guild. Two weavers responded to me. The first was Ms. Mathilde Murphy. She is a master weaver who teaches classes at the Chautauqua Institute. We spent an afternoon together as she explained much about the process of weaving, material selection, weaving patterns and limitations of the loom. As she had a previous commitment to teach at Chautauqua this summer, we were unable to schedule classes.

The second weaver to respond to my request was Ms. Jill Rouke. As she lives within fifteen minutes of my home, we began to schedule lessons. At our first meeting, Jill showed me some of her work. She finds weaving to be a meditative practice and intentionally weaves the language of Eastern meditation into her work. Her work triggers a strong sense of calm. In addition to a link to the meditative aspect of this master's project, another coincidence appeared. In preparation for her first professional exhibition, she was looking for glass rods with finials to display her weavings. She was having no luck until she stumbled across the *Glass Blowing Center* and Tom Doner – my first instructor in glass. I knew intuitively at our first meeting that there was much I could learn from her.

### Teachers

Kerss, Tari. Fabric Artist. *Edinboro University of Pennsylvania*, Edinboro, PA (no longer with the University).

Murphy, Mathilde. Fabric Artist. Meadville, PA.

Rouke, Jill. Fabric Artist. McKean, PA

### Literature

Chandler, D. (2009). *Learning to weave* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Loveland, CO: Interweave Press.

## **Water and Painting**

Glass and Fabric are linked in my mind because of their interaction with light and the patterns that light and dark make. In addition to this appreciation for light and dark, I am also deeply appreciative of water. I live in a place where weather fronts collide. What I know best about the weather here is that it changes – and that the changes are always linked to water in the atmosphere. I cherish beach vacations and I walk every day (for more than 4000 sequential days, now). My dad was an artist; as a child I watched him work in oils, acrylics and watercolors. His expertise, by far, lay in the watercolors. I can remember watching as he mixed colors and used different tools to place the color on the paper. As I pursued the glass and weaving lessons two opportunities to link painting and water arose. An elementary art teacher (and friend), Ms. Sharon DiMasi offered to provide me with an introductory lesson in working with watercolors. I spent an afternoon on her deck looking at pictures from masters and playing with the water and the color. At the CPSI conference Ms. Amy Basic (Segami) presented ‘Painting on Water’ at the opening session. Later in the week I attended a three hour session to delve deeper into the technique.

While other obligations have limited my opportunity to play with watercolors and painting on water, I am amassing supplies and am confident that there is much to be learned from working in these media.

### Teachers

Basic (Segami), Amy. Artist. *Segami Studios*. Chicago, IL.

DeMasi, Sharon. Artist. Edinboro, PA.

## **Yoga, Meditation and Introspection**

By far, the majority of my reading fell into this category. The art of meditation and introspection was the most difficult challenge of this project. I began this leg of the journey with my sister, Ms. Su Rehm, who has practiced meditation for over thirty years. She helped to frame the goals of the practice (to be, to be open). Ms. Jean Fera is a retired faculty member from Edinboro University – a friend and, in the region, the person most knowledgeable about yoga. She leads a bi-weekly yoga class that I have attended as much as possible since the middle of May. In looking towards a practice of meditation, I read Goldman's **The 7 Secrets of Sound Healing**. It introduced me to the chakras and began to focus me on auditory input. I tried a guided meditation with Lang's CD (**Opening to Meditation**) – with minimal success. On the advice of Ms. Jean Sun Shaw, I began to read Leonard's work on awareness and intention. I am working with his DVD on the **Tao of Practice** and **Integral Transformative Practice**. In preparation for a CPSI session with Ms. Hedria Lunken I read **Square One at 51**.

I found her clear picture of a future to be enthralling. At CPSI, as I was beginning to sense a spiritual aspect to this master's project, I found Sisk and Torrance's **Spiritual Intelligence**. I read this book after the close of CPSI. It was important in drawing together the experiences of the project and helped me to synthesize this final report.

### Teachers

Fera, Jean. Yoga Instructor. *County YMCA*. Edinboro, PA.

Rehm, Susannah. Practitioner of Kabala and Formal Buddhist Meditations,  
Sedona. AZ.

### Literature, CDs and DVDs

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Lang, D. (2004). *Opening to meditation: A gentle, guided approach*. Novato, CA: New World Library.

Leonard, G. (1992). *Mastery: The keys to success and long-term fulfillment*. New York: NY, Plume Publishing.

Leonard, G. (2006). *The silent pulse: A search for the perfect rhythm that exists in each of us*. Layton, UT, Gibbs Smith Publisher.

Leonard, G. and M. Murphy. (2007). *The life we are given: A long term program for realizing the potential of body, mind, heart and soul*. New York: NY, Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin Publishing.

Lunken, H. (2007). *Square one at 51: What I did the day after I buried my life.*

Rochester, NY: Windsor Media Enterprises.

Sisk, D. A. and E. P. Torrance. (2001). *Spiritual Intelligence.* Buffalo, NY,

Creative Education Foundation Press.

## **Collaboration: The Wisdom of the Learned**

Much of the progress on this project has been framed by conversations with Ms. Jean Sun-Shaw, a life coach whom I hired to help me define a passion. In preparation for this goal, I worked with Bolles' **What Color is Your Parachute** and Bridges' **Transitions**. As I began to investigate the creativity of my hands, Cameron's **The Artist's Way** provided some important insight. Seminal work of Parnes (**Optimize the Magic of Your Mind**) and Maslow (**Towards a Psychology of Being** and **Motivation and Personality**) helped to frame the questions for investigation of the project and also helped to better understand the journey towards self-actualization. Ms. Cyndi Burnett generously shared a few chapters of her doctoral thesis; they were important in helping me to better understand the continuum of problem solving between intuition and logic.

During this project I attended the 56<sup>th</sup> CPSI conference at Buffalo, NY ([www.cpsiconference.com](http://www.cpsiconference.com)). Rather than pursue a conference strand that focused primarily on facilitation and/or coaching, I opted to attend a full week of Pathways to Applied Creativity and Explorations (PACE) workshops. The CPSI conference became an emotional and spiritual journey for me. [As I have provided a link to the conference site above, I have not included information for

the following individuals]. They were each influential in helping me to process the content of this project.

- **Matteo Catullo** – *Alice in Wonderland: An Interactive Journey into your own Creative Being*. During this session Matteo asked us to choose a stone to represent something very important to us. I imagined it to be a very special gift that my husband had shared on our twenty-fifth anniversary. We then gave the stone to someone else who played ‘keep away’ from us. Even before the activity started I was uncomfortable. As my partner refused to return it to me, I became very upset and opted out of the remainder of the program. This session helped me to understand that there were some things that are just too valuable to release.
- **Tamara Christensen** – *Feel This Creativity: Tactile Tactics for Creative Problem Solving*. In this session Tamara emphasized potential for kinesthetic, auditory and tactile activities in a CPS session. As I have worked through this master’s program, I often found that my preferences were different from most others. I was deeply grateful as Tamara encouraged participants to be attentive to this type of diversity.
- **Cyndi Burnett and Janice Francisco** – *Making Intuition a Deliberate Part of Your Creative Problem Solving Practice*. Cyndi and Janice presented research and practice evidence for encouraging the use of intuition in creative problem solving. Their **Facts, Feelings, Hunches**

and **Head, Heart, Gut** tools were especially useful in helping me to recognize intuitive approaches to problem solving. Indeed, I was able to draw parallels to my ‘pulling strings’ to see where the future might lead. Their activity to be mindful with a glass of water really spoke to me; after all, water IS my favorite molecule. I walked out of this session understanding that awareness, intention and mindfulness were important in the journey of my project. The emphasis on a holistic approach resonated very strongly with me.

- **Lee Dunne** – *The Chakras? Who Knew?* As I’ve begun to study yoga, I’ve encountered ‘the chakras.’ I had little understanding of them and found much clarification in Lee’s presentation. As I work with yoga, the sun salutations and the integral transformative practice, I am beginning to glimpse insight into a balance with external energies. As a scientist, I am curious of the historical foundation in these practices and the electromagnetic ramifications of the connections. I’m finding **Spiritual Intelligence** is helping to clarify.
- **Marguerite Battaglia** – *Mindfulness and Creativity*. For the second time in a day I bumped into the concept of mindfulness. Marguerite’s session was a quiet, meditative session designed to help you to be in the present moment. In discussion with other participants after the session, I found myself to be different in that I was very comfortable spending the time focusing on my breath – and being fairly oblivious to what occurred around it. I was able to leave the session recognizing

that I have very little of the mental chatter that people call “Monkey Mind.”

- **Marci Segal – *Creativity and Type*.** In this session Marci modeled ways to work with individuals who have different Myers-Briggs preferences than mine. At one point she made a clear distinction between the preferences of Sensing and of Intuition. It did not surprise me that my sensing preference was a minority at CPSI. She explained that a Sensing preference deals with “now” and that the Intuitive preference deals with “what might be”. At the close of the session I looked at her timeline and asked how someone with a now preference manages to plan a future. She suggested a few questions to consider; this led to an insight that my focused search for the future was diametrically opposed to my personal preference of living in the now.
- **Lynette McCormack, Lisa Michaels and Gloria Williams – *Natural Rhythms at Work*.** The presenters explained an historical view of the year with primary focus on the fall and spring equinoxes, the summer and winter solstices and the four feasts that fall between them. The analogy of incubation, planting, growth and harvest made good sense to me. I realized that I have chosen to live and work in a place where the weather clearly marks these seasons of the year. I also recognized that my planning and execution of this master’s project followed the rhythms that were presented.



- **Joe Miguez** – *the Lab Xperience: Synthesize Your CPSI Experience.*

For the past few months I have been hearing about the labyrinth. In mid week I walked the labyrinth at CPSI and garnered no new insights. On Thursday evening as we danced in the lounge I met Joe. We had an extended conversation and he encouraged me to attend his closing session the next morning. I did so and, with his direction, learned two important things – that my journey has something to do with a creative voice and that TTT – things take time.

### Teachers

Those listed above and ...

Burnett, Cyndi, Faculty. International Center for the Studies of Creativity, Buffalo State College.

Sun-Shaw, Jean. Life Coach. life's journey, LLC. New York, NY.

### Literature

Bolles, R. N. (2009). *What color is your parachute? 2009: A practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers.* Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Bridges, W. (2004). *Transitions: Making sense of life's changes* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.

Burnett, C. (not yet published). *Chapters 4 and 5, Doctoral Thesis.*

Cameron, J. (2007). *The complete artist's way: Creativity as a spiritual practice.* New York, NY: Jeremy B. Tarcher/Penguin Publishing.

Maslow, A. H. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.

Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Harper and Row.

Parnes, S. J. (1997). *Optimize the magic of your mind*. Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

### **Selected Additional Bibliography**

The following resources have been critical in laying a foundation for my understanding of the psychology, physiology and neurobiochemistry of creativity and its link to education. Through assorted course assignments of the creative studies program, I have read each of the following articles, texts and books. In combination, they have led me to a personal clarification of creativity and creative problem solving. I found seminal works by Osborn and Parnes useful in focusing me on the task of the project. Runco and Davis were ready resources in remembering and locating foundational literature. Key facets to my understanding of creativity include the concept of multiple intelligences (Gardner, Guilford and Zhang) and the clarification of emotional facets to creativity (Torrance and Maslow). As a teacher, I was strongly influenced by the importance of creative approaches to education (Murdock, Keller-Mathers and Puccio). As someone skilled at synthesis, Mednick's thoughts of creativity as an associative process was a point of pivotal learning. Finally, as a trained scientist (and a scientist trainer), it became very important to understand creativity in the

frame of science – psychology, physiology, biology, neurology and chemistry (Caselli, Dietrich and Zull).

Caselli, R. H. (2009). Creativity: An organizational schema. *Cognitive Behavior Neurology*. 22(3), 143-153.

Davis, G. A. (2004). *Creativity is forever*, (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

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- Zhang, L. (2002). Thinking styles: Their relationships with modes of thinking and academic performance. *Educational Psychology*, 22(3), 331-348.
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## **Section Three**

### **Process Plan**

My intent with this project was to find a Passion to serve as a foundation for a next career. As I had been unsuccessful with previous modes of attack on the problem, it seemed that a more intuitive mode of problem solving might be appropriate. In order to develop that intuition, I decided to delve into creating things with my hands. These products were made of glass, fiber (weaving) and paint. In addition, I worked with yoga and other meditative practices in an attempt to improve my skills of reflection. Finally, I attended conferences and held conversations with a life coach in an attempt to clarify my thinking in regard to 'what comes next.'

This plan was executed between May 15 and July 31 of 2010. At the close of Edinboro University's Spring 2010 term, I decided to focus time and energy exclusively on the work of completing this project. In early/mid May I identified teachers and began to schedule classes. I also registered for the Expert2Expert and CPSI conferences at Buffalo, NY. I signed a contract with a life coach. During the next two months I spent time reading, in lessons, in conversations and in deliberate reflection. Indeed, my daily walk (of 4000<sup>+</sup> sequential days) became a time to consider what I was learning from this variety of creative input. While the lessons for this project have been completed, I will continue to study the skills of working with glass, fabric and introspection.

## Project Final Timeline

Activity	Date(s)	Travel (hours)	Lesson (hours)	Practice/ other work (hours)
Torch Glass <sup>1</sup>	May 10	3	2	
Fused glass <sup>2</sup>	May 21, 28 June 4, 7		8	5
Blown glass demo <sup>3</sup>	May 29		2	
Blown/pulled glass <sup>4</sup>	June 9	4	4	
Weaving <sup>5</sup>	May 16-present (7 lessons)	4	14	45
Yoga <sup>6</sup> Meditation ITP	May 24-present		9	20
Expert2Expert Conference	May 19	4	8	
CPSI Conference	June 20-25	4	44	
Life Coach <sup>7</sup>	May 27 June 15 July 9		3	10
Reading <sup>8</sup>	May 10-present			40
Conversations with Advisor	June 10		2	
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Approximation of total time towards project = 230 hours</b>				

<sup>1</sup> I visited the Glass Blowing Center in Hilliards, PA. Mr. Tom Doner led me through a lesson at the torch to make pendants and a small blown glass sample (which he decorated to form the bird). [Additional information on primary instructors is included in Appendix A.]

<sup>2</sup> Ms. Sally Scarlett, an artist in fused glass welcomed me into her home and studio and guided me through the creation of two fused glass plates.

<sup>3</sup> I attended a demonstration by local glass artist Herb Thomas at Campbell Pottery, Cambridge Springs, PA

<sup>4</sup> I took two lessons – one on Garden Floats and a second on Pulled Flowers – at the Pittsburgh Glass Center.

<sup>5</sup> I spent one lesson with Ms. Mathilde Murphy and, to date, an additional 6 lessons with Ms. Jill Rouke in their homes. I have produced several samplers from the work with Jill and have started a first project.

<sup>6</sup> 90 minute yoga classes at the local YMCA are led by Ms. Jean Fera. I have worked with meditation tapes and the DVD of the kata from George Leonard's Integral Transformative Practice.

<sup>7</sup> I have had three conversations with Ms. Jean Sun Shaw of Life's Journey, LLC. They have focused on assertions, self-awareness, the voice of an introvert and understanding and accepting ambiguity.

<sup>8</sup> As detailed above, much time has been spent in reading books that might contribute to my understanding, primarily in regards to the reflective piece of this project.

## **Section Four**

### **Outcomes**

This section of the report reviews the artistic products that were produced as I worked with glass, weaving and paint and water. Photographs of the work and brief descriptions of the process of their creation are included. As the reflective, intuitive facets of the project led to some important insights, they are discussed in sections five (key learnings) and six (conclusions).

### **Glass**

The glass work started with torch work – the products are pendants (see Figure 1) and my first blown glass bubbles (which the instructor converted to a bird, see Figure 2).

*Figure 1. Pendants – Torch Work.*



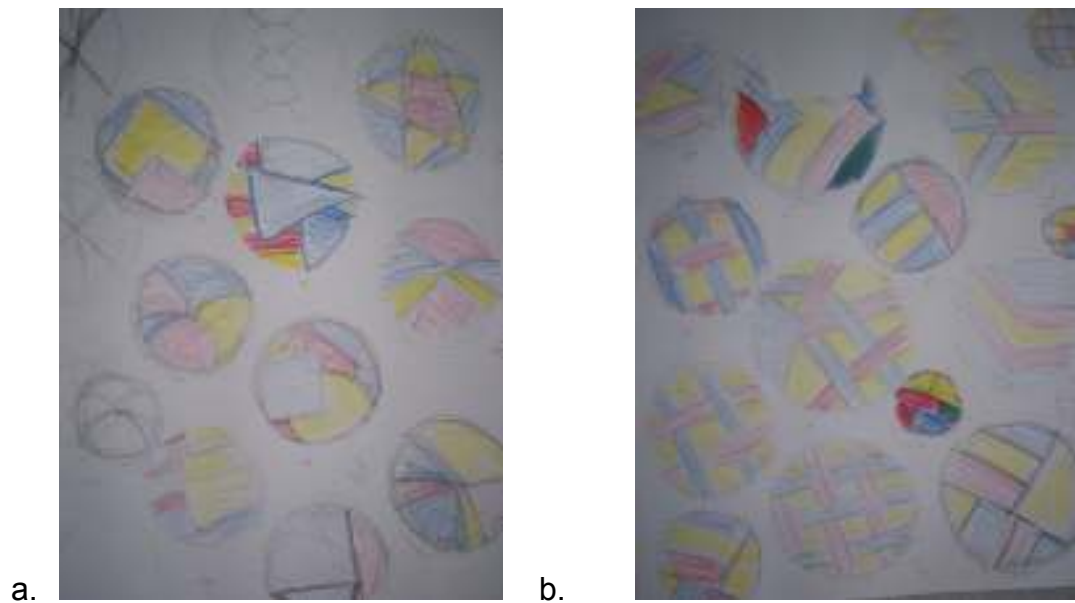
*Figure 2. Bird – First Blown Glass.*





I then worked with kiln-fused glass. The first product was cut colored pieces between two clear rounds of glass. The layers were fused together and then slumped to form a plate. I've included sketches for the possible design of this plate (see Figure 3a and 3b) and a photograph of the final product (see Figure 4).

*Figure 3.* Possible designs for a fused glass plate.

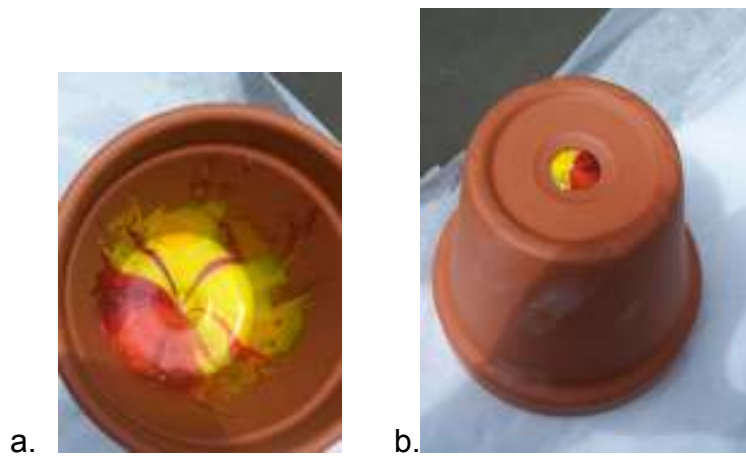


*Figure 4.* Plate – Fused glass project (piece measures ~10 inches in diameter)



The second fused piece used the drip pot technique. Shards of glass were placed in a kiln-safe pot. The pot was placed into the kiln and the glass was heated to liquid. The molten glass then dripped through the hole and onto the kiln floor. The disc that formed was then slumped into a mold to form a small plate. I've included photos of the top and bottom of the drip pot (see Figures 5a and 5b) and the final product (see Figure 6).

*Figure 5.* Post-kiln drip pot; - Top (a) and Bottom (b).



*Figure 6.* Plate – Drip Pot



The final set of glass products, produced at the Pittsburgh Glass Center (PGC), started with balls of molten glass. In the first class, we worked in teams (one person shaped and one person blew) to form garden floats (see Figure 7). At our request, the instructor added hooks so that we could hang them in windows.

*Figure7.* Garden Floats – Blown Glass



In the second class at PGC we again started with molten balls of glass, flattened them into discs and then pulled the edges of the discs to form flowers (see Figures 8, 9a and 9b).

*Figure 8. Flower 1 – Pulled glass.*



With the second flower, we worked to generate a spiraled stem so that the flower could stand – in doing so, the shape of the flower was lost and I was disappointed in this product (see Figure 9a) ...

*Figure 9a. Flower 2 – Pulled glass*



... until I stood it in a different way (see Figure 9b).

*Figure 9b.* Flower 2 – as a peacock.



## Weaving

My first weaving lesson involved stringing a three-yard warp. Between that lesson and the next, I borrowed a table-top loom that was already warped. During that time I played with sequences of raising the harnesses to produce a first product (see Figure 10). The weave was irregular and uneven – primarily because I raised individual harnesses rather than pairs.

*Figure 10.* First weaving attempt



I took the loom to the next lesson and learned to read patterns and to work the loom with pairs of harnesses. I completed approximately two yards of fabric using varied patterns before I returned to my instructor (see Figures 11a and 11b).

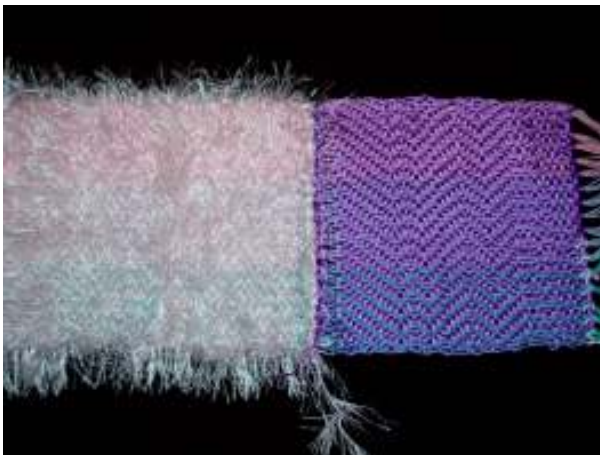


*Figure 11a.* Fabric after lesson 1.



As I wove this long piece, I ran out of white weft thread and played a bit with a fuzzy yarn and a flat ribbon in the same patterns (see Figure 11b).

*Figure 11b.* Fabric with different weft threads.



The warp was threaded in a different sequence that produced much different patterns. I have incorporated a fragment of this warp into a product (A

Journey to Self: Divergence and Convergence) that has been submitted with this report (see Figure 12).

*Figure 12a.* A Journey to Self: Divergence and Convergence



*Figure 12b.* Close up of weave on piece



I continue to weave. The project now on the loom will become a wool, cashmere and alpaca scarf for my mother's Christmas gift.



## Water and Painting

In an opening session, Amy Basic (Segami) taught CPSI conference participants to paint on water. I attended a second presentation during the conference and delved a bit deeper into the technique (see Figure 13 and Figure 14). I have purchased supplies for this technique and will continue to play with it.

*Figure 13.* Painting on water – skewers



*Figure 14.* Painting on water – brushes.



### **Yoga, Meditation and Introspection Collaboration: The Wisdom of the Learned**

The products of these portions of the project are much less tangible. They center on awareness, mindfulness, intuition and intention and will be discussed in more depth in the final sections of this project report.

## **Section Five**

### **Key Learnings**

I learned much from each of the aspects of this project. While there were many facets to it (glass, fiber, paint, intuition, reflection and future-planning), I am glad that I pulled so much input into a small block of time. In conversation with my life coach, I described these past few months as a golden droplet of time – a time when I could set aside the responsibilities of my work as a university professor of chemistry. This has been a time of reflective and creative immersion; it has been multi-sensory, interactive and guided by inquiry. This portion of the report details key learnings of the project.

In the Background of this document I skimmed over a gap between walking with my dad as a child and teaching chemistry at the university. I grew up with many siblings. More than a few have incredible artistic talent. I learned that I was the ‘smart’ one – that my talent (intelligence, if you will) lie in the understanding of mathematics and science. I stepped away from creative endeavors (intentionally, or unintentionally). Occasionally I would sew craft projects or put energy into elaborate decorations for holidays. Over time, these activities became fewer. This golden droplet of time has been rich. I have learned much about myself and preferences that should be addressed for my future. These observations, and their impact on my future are discussed in more detail below.

As a chemist, the arrangement of the atoms in soda-lime and borosilicate glass enthrall me. The unique properties of glass lie in the formation, realignment and re-formation of the bonds between the silicon, oxygen, sodium and boron atoms (among others). The fact that glass can be heated to a molten phase, reshaped and cooled in a manner to retain that shape has deep meaning to the scientist of me. I understand that different elements in the glass mixture allow it to interact with light in different ways – and to color the products with different hues.

As a student of creativity and a novice at working with glass, I have learned some important lessons. The first lesson came at Sally Scarlett's studio. Naively, I had thought that working with glass would be a simple endeavor. She showed me the breadth of possibilities and helped me to frame categories of work. I was glad to have the opportunity to work with a torch (rod work), a kiln (fused work) and the furnace (blown and pulled work).

The second important lesson came as I left the Pittsburgh Glass Center. I understand that molten glass that has been shaped must be slowly cooled so that the atoms of the silicon oxides can realign; I did not anticipate that I would leave the Center without my work. After shaping glowing balls of molten glass, dipping them into frit (small crumbs of colored glass) and shaping them at the glassblower's bench, the balls and flowers were cut from the pontil (the rod that holds the molten glass) and quickly placed into an annealing oven. The glass was still glowing red hot as it went into the oven and there was no way to really see what the glass had become. The balls and flowers were in the oven as I left

the Center; it was a full week before they were mailed to my home. The anticipation and frustration caused by the wait were very important lessons to an implementer. I began to see the importance of time and patience in the creative endeavor. I learned the same lesson as threads became fabric in weaving.

Molten glass quickly cools and must be heated repeatedly while it is being worked. By the fourth piece at the PGC, I was beginning to develop a sense for when the glass was too cool to flow into the new shape. At the time, I found the texture of the hot (readily flows) and cooling (resistant to flow) glass to be an analogy for Csikzentmihalyi's flow (1990). In all instances of working with the glass – at the torch with the pendants, at the bench shaping pieces for the fused plate and at the oven with the balls and flowers – I found complete focus, joy and a loss of time. This creative media takes me to that idealized state of being.

More than any other aspect of this project, learning to weave has unveiled a tactile creativity. The opportunity to train my hands to move from strands of thread to patterned fabric feels like a deep blessing. The technical, mathematical and logical aspects speak deeply to my scientific intelligences. The tactile beauty of the product speaks of an artistically creative side that I am just beginning to revisit. As I consider my creative style, I believe that one of my greatest strengths lies in making unexpected associations. This melds well with Mednick's idea that creativity is formed from mental associations (1962). I see weaving as a tactile, visual representation of synthesis. In both weaving and synthesis strands are pulled together to make a unique product.

Additional key lessons from the experience of this project include:

- Realization that I have a strong need to express my creativity in a tactile manner. In many ways, the acts of weaving and shaping glass have reminded me of a time when I played in artistic media with my dad. This work/play is deeply satisfying and exciting.
- A friend from the program told me "You are exactly where many people strive to be." Unlike many others, I am comfortable in living in the moment, thinking with an uncluttered mind and being receptive to opportunities and possibilities. I attribute these traits primarily to my parents. They showed me how to be calm and to be quiet enough to hear what nature and my heart have to say.
- I have found key aspects of a passion. Working simultaneously on a varied group of interests has clarified a joy and a passion for learning. I am especially invested in knowing how things occur. The technical and mathematical aspects of the loom coupled with the diversity in pattern and texture of its fabrics represents a near perfect opportunity for creative expression. I will continue this work.
- It is important that I better understand myself. For the last eighteen months and through this project I have put an extraordinary amount of energy into trying to define/decipher a future. At CPSI Marci Segal described a visioning activity with Sid Parnes where she "got nothing." As she continued to describe how she was unique (Sensing preference vs

an Intuitive one), it mirrored many of my experiences. Myers-Briggs testing classifies me as an ISFJ. As she explained how individuals with different preferences view time, I wondered “If my preference is the now, how do I build for a future?” After that session I had the first opportunity in several days to walk outside. I walked, and walked, and walked – and found myself in the cool quiet of St. Joseph Cathedral considering a stained glass window of (I thought) St. Therese. As I sat in the calm of the church, under the light of the saint of small kindnesses, it became clear that there was no need to define a future. I now choose to live my life joyfully in this day and to allow the future to unfold as it may.

In final preparation of this report I again spoke with Marci. Based on my Myers-Briggs preference she immediately spoke of being of service to others by providing caring leadership. [This mirrors very closely my vision statement from the CRS635 Foundations of Creative Learning course – “I will serve by leading creatively and joyfully.”] Marci also suggested that I have a strong preference to bring order from chaos – consistent with my skill at synthesis. She pointed out that my dominant preference is Introvert Sensing and that my inferior preference – one that develops later in life – is Intuition. It made sense to her that I began this program at this point in my life. I talked with Marci because, though I choose to live with my preference – to be present in this moment, I do want to plan for a future beyond my current teaching

position. In support of that, Marci advised me, over the next few years, to consider 'What I could provide for others so that they could feel secure?' and 'Who might those others be?' In the last few years I have built a folder of web sites, flyers and magazine clippings. As I complete the Creative Studies program, I will return to that folder and review it with the questions that she, with her deep understanding of learning preferences, so generously framed for me.



## **Section Six**

### **Conclusion**

As I began this project, I anticipated some tangible products/outcomes (see Proposal Paper, Appendix C):

- *I will create some original glass and fabric art pieces.* – Photographs above clearly indicate that I have achieved this outcome.
- *I will learn key skills of meditation and stretching.* – I have learned that I am fairly introspective. As I learned of meditation, I found that individuals are working to a state of awareness of the present moment. My parents raised me to be in the present. I am aware and alert to what is now. For the most part, if my hands are full and/or my feet are moving I am better able to tap into emotional and spiritual insights.
- *I will know what next career to plan for.* – Because of my preference to live in the now, I have decided to ‘plan’ a future based on the opportunities that I encounter. For the immediate future, I will work to incorporate key learnings from this project into my current job of chemistry professor. A member of the Gr8’s cohort asked if I would agree to a coaching conversation as part of his re-certification. I agreed. We started with “How might I better serve my students as I recommit to living fully in this day?” What started out as a favor to a friend ended up giving me a wealth of ideas for planning a change in

my classroom for September. I am toying with the idea of starting the class with an iPod or cell phone – and asking the students to generate all the questions that they can to better understand it. I can easily see this exercise expanding to a discussion of elements, compounds, plastics, electromagnetic waves and countless other possibilities. I am considering the possibility of using student interests to guide the direction of the course. I already have a list of the key course concepts – we might check them off as we proceed through different topics. Planning for the course revision is in its infancy and will build after August 1.

As I began this project, I defined some personal learning goals:

- *To learn basics of working with glass and with fabric.*
- *To better express creativity in artistic product.* – While they are rudimentary skills, I have learned enough of glass and weaving to produce artistic product. The small wall hanging of Figure 12 (A Journey to Self: Divergence and Convergence) represents my travel through the Creative Studies program and to the present that I now embrace. The simple glass support rod represents the foundation of my education that was provided by my parents. They taught me to be grateful, to be accepting of diversity and to be aware of a moment. The warp which forms the fringe represents the strength of the piece and also shows the many paths that have led me to a study of creativity. The repetitive diamond pattern in the piece shows recurring

instances of diverging and converging – each of those myriad choices that have pulled me to the present. Note that the white of the weft and the turquoise of the warp must work together to build an overall pattern. Like me, the final piece is the sum of the parts that comprise it. The tail fringe, to me, represents a world of possibilities for the future – and a clarity that I will know which to choose when it appears.

- *To become more sensitive to intuition.* – In this project I searched for a more intuitive mode of problem solving. It turns out there was little need to do so. The teachers, the lessons and the path of the project and the search for the future were all chosen by “following strings.” I have been impressed with the connections that have appeared for me.
  - Mary Murdock encouraged a conversation with Hedria Lunken. Hedria told me her mother’s name is the same as mine. In a phone discussion we found a similarity in the experiences of the master’s program – and our age as we entered it. We have decided that we are not quite sure why Mary thought that Hedria would be a good mentor for me; we have agreed to continue conversations.
  - I found a glassblower in a small town near my mother – about 90 miles from my home. My weaving instructor found the same artist in the same month.
  - I decided to investigate introspection and meditation. I found a weaver who sees weaving as a meditative act and incorporates blessings into her products.
  - I have a lifelong fascination with water and snow. My dad was a watercolorist and a multimedia artist. In this journey, I’ve found a lesson in watercolors and have learned the fundamentals of painting on water. On the last trip before he died, my father traveled to the Corning Glass Museum and made me a gift of a glass snowflake. I will make a trip to visit that Museum.

- I had intentionally avoided sessions at CPSI that dealt with CPS facilitation and coaching. I was searching for a more intuitive, emotional and spiritual conference. One of the few exceptions to this 'rule' was to attend Marci Segal's session on Creativity and Type. It turned out to be one of the most enlightening sessions of the conference.
- I planned a trip to a nearby labyrinth with a friend. I found a labyrinth at CPSI. It spoke little to me until I met Joe Miguez on the night before the conference closed. His confidence that "I wasn't done yet" sent me to his closing session and a budding awareness that I need to spend more time in production of creative things. He also encouraged me to visit the Corning Glass Museum (he was unaware of the connection to my dad).
- For as long as I can remember, as I listen to friends grapple with questions, I ask them "How's your head? How's your heart?" I have learned to also ask them "How's your gut?"

With this project I wanted to learn to be more reflective, more introspective. I have made some growth here and will continue to strive and grow in this aspect of my creativity.

- *To enhance visioning skills* – My life coach challenged my statement that "I am not good at envisioning a future." As she asked for evidence, I first struggled with semantics and then realized that my visioning is strongly based on being receptive to possibilities. I do not plan my life for years in advance. I do see opportunities, gauge my interest in them and then quickly make a decision to pursue them. My mode of 'envisioning' seems to be an evolving one; one based on seeing and accepting those growth possibilities as they occur.

In the proposal paper, I considered four ways to evaluate my progress:

- *Monitor personal satisfaction with learning.*

- *Monitor personal satisfaction with growth* – I went through a period of frustration with this project. I was thrilled to be weaving and to be working with glass. I found some calmness in the lessons of yoga. I was frustrated with an inability to understand how the meditative state was different from my normal way of being. I found myself no closer to clarifying a Passion; I did not see the path to a future. And then, I went to CPSI. There were hundreds of conversations and hints of things that I needed to know. In the end, I had to move away from the chaos of the conference, my feet had to take me to water and then to the silence of a church – and then, things became more clear. I was able to articulate “Learning is my passion” and “Living in today is my preference.” Both resonate clearly with me. These realizations are my deep, honest truths. It is with a release of tension and frustration that I move away from ‘what comes tomorrow’ and towards ‘the joy of today.’
- *Present artwork for evaluation.* – As Appendix B, I have included a list of all who have seen and evaluated/commented on my work in glass and fiber.
- *Ask life coach to assess progress.* – At my request, Jean Sun Shaw makes these comments:

Though our actual coaching conversations of 3 sessions were much too brief to address the weighty goal of identifying your passion, we did begin the process of learning and discovering. I observe that your present is your future. It is constitutive and becomes an aspect of your future. You are living in the present and you are constructing your future, piece by piece, until a new reality, a new wholeness emerges. You are in process. The shift in you (progression) that I observe in the 6 weeks that we had been together, is that you have put yourself on the path of adopting new

practices, which in turn, affirmed back to you a passion for learning. I invite you to take this awareness and get to know it even better, deepen the awareness, before beginning to design a plan. There is also a lightness in you that I had not experienced, when we first started coaching.

Jean and I are clearly in agreement that I have begun a shift from laser focus on the task of defining a future towards letting a future unfold. The latter mode sits much more comfortably on my shoulders; the lightness she sees, I think. I will take her advice to continue to revel in the experience of learning something new. It has been a long while since I have taken time for hobbies. The joy that I have found in working with the glass and the fabric will ensure that these endeavors will stay in my life for a long time.

## **Final Comments**

I used to live very joyfully in each day; I believe that each day is a gift and that gratitude for that gift is best expressed by embracing the day fully. In 2006-07 I spent a tumultuous year on sabbatical leave. I returned to the university exhausted and unable to retrieve that joyful approach to life. I quickly entered the Master's Program in Creative Studies and found new and exciting experiences. I opened a door to creative expression that had been closed for many, many years. I embraced this new awareness and felt a pull to a new future. I began to focus energy on uncovering that future – and it became an increasingly frustrating experience. As I neared the end of the program, I entered this project with a clear plan to define my Passion and to use that Passion to guide me to the future. I was very logical in defining aspects of that

plan around preferences (tactile in the glass work and weaving) and challenges (introspection and intuition).

As I traveled through the program, this project and a search for what comes next, I found that I was forcing myself into a mold that did not quite fit. As I listened to descriptions, I sensed that I understood better than others what it means to 'live in the moment.' When they explained that meditation was about quieting the chatter in the mind, because I hear little chatter, I couldn't understand. As they told me to be aware, I looked at the sun through the leaves and saw their shadows on the ground; this is my every day – and I found it difficult to understand how they saw it differently. As I relinquish the search for what comes next, there is an acceptance of what is.

In this project I searched for a Passion. It turns out that there was no need to do so. As I learned of yoga, glass and fibers I recognized that the passion that I have carried from childhood is one of Learning. I was raised in a culture of wonder; being inquisitive seems innate. As I articulated a Passion of learning, I began to reflect on my teachers. The Buddhist maxim "When the student is ready, the master will appear" held true for me. As needed, they appeared to teach creativity, to link weaving and meditation, to explain the disconnect between the future and now and to help me to return to a life of now. As I admire the timing and wisdom of my teachers, I am reflecting on the impact it will have on my teaching. I have a strong introvert preference; it is rare that I need to share what is in my head. As a teacher, I have an obligation to communicate with my students. There are some immediate implications of this dichotomy and the

learning that has been garnered. It seems important to better articulate my philosophy of teaching – and to hear my students ideas around learning. My demeanor is often reserved; I'm developing a Top Ten list to help my students better understand that the furrow between my brow comes from curiosity, not from censure. Now that I have made a conscious choice to focus energies in today and it is unlikely that I will leave my current teaching position in the next few years, I will spend considerable energy in applying what I've learned of my preferences to better facilitate my student's learning.

Sternberg (1988) talks of intelligence, cognitive style, personality and motivation as key components of creativity. Davis (2004) suggests that it is important to do creative activities to cultivate creativity. While it should have been expected, I was surprised at the impact of making creative product. As I worked with the glass, the fiber and the paints, my hands led me to a calmness that had been difficult to find for quite some time. This act of creating things that I found aesthetically pleasing led me to pride and joy. There was some certainty that my hands needed to be filled in this way.

Lee Dunne explained that the throat chakra deals with communication, telepathy, and creative expression. Unexpressed emotions tend to constrict this energy center. As someone with chronic neck pain I began to consider whether I indeed express my true emotions. As an introvert, I often do not; usually it is a conscious choice that my comments will add little to the conversation. At the labyrinth, my awareness focused again on a personal voice. The experience with the tactile creativity made me see a clear stifling of creative expression.



Making creative things with my hands has identified a key personal preference. I am confident that this aspect of the project will stay with me for the rest of my life.

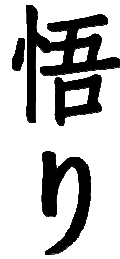
I did not expect this journey to be as emotional and as spiritual as it became. I found emotion in holding on to things that are dear. During the time of the project I have made three trips to visit my mother. I shared with her the creative products and the questions that arose in their discovery. Her insights and recommendations have helped in this journey that started with the year of the sabbatical. Through the emotion of this experience, I have found a new connection to the wisdom of my mother. I am humbled by her strong beliefs in God. I am in awe that the saint that she chose for me is one who embraces me in ease and love. I really like that St. Therese has no need of great gestures and is able to see the blessings of simple acts. As I studied yoga and learned of the chakras, sufi dancing and the labyrinth, there was resonance with their calm, quiet spiritual nature. I was raised Catholic – with its tenets of an all-knowing, all-mighty God. My beliefs have shifted to the idea of a Supreme Being. With this project, I have begun to learn that in the Eastern practices:

Everything is viewed as dynamically connected with everything else in the universe. All actions take place in time through the interweaving of the forces of nature and phenomenon perceived by the senses as part of the reality... To be liberated, one must recognize that everything is connected and sense the unity and harmony of all nature, including ourselves and to act accordingly (Sisk & Torrance, p. 72).

I see key facets of synthesis in this passage.

I end this report with the symbol for Satori (see Figure 15), a Buddhist term for “the first step”, an embarkation towards nirvana. It is linked to a related term, Kensho which means “seeing one’s nature.”

*Figure 15. Sartori and Kensho.*



Together, they represent an intuitive experience analogous to awakening with an additional pair of arms, and only later learning how to use them ([www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)). As a student of creativity, I have repeatedly heard “Listen to the Universe.” My mother says “Pray to God.” This project has led me to a path of self-actualization. I am certain that the journey will continue. I still sense an inevitability to its goal; my future seems to be preordained. At the labyrinth Joe Miquez told me “TTT”, Things take time. I have let go of the search for the future with a rush of tears and a deep exhalation of release. I am confident that by living in the joy of today I will find the future of tomorrow. More importantly, this search for a future has been a path to a less frustrated, happier, calmer self who recognizes and appreciates the beauty and the gifts of this day.

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**Section Seven****Appendices**

## **Appendix A**

### **Teachers**

## Glass

Instructor: Mr. Tom Doner  
The Glass Blowing Center  
Hillards, PA  
[www.glass123.com](http://www.glass123.com)



The Glass Blowing Center is a brand new 3,600 square foot facility containing a gift shop and a large demonstration hall. The gift shop features handcrafted gifts for every occasion, taste, and budget. Our demonstration hall allows the public to experience molten glass formed into vessels, marbles, and sculptures in an open flame. With seating for up to 100 people, we offer free educational glass blowing demonstrations that are custom tailored for your group of 10 or more. Please call to schedule your group demonstration today.

Proprietor's Tom and Elaine Doner are committed to promoting the share of knowledge in the glass working community. Each year they host the longest running glass convention in the United States, called the "Art Glass Invitational" (A.G.I.) where glass blowers come to share their knowledge with their peers. Our 2003 event brought 50 flame workers together from across the United States and Canada who participated in classes, lectures, and demonstrations. Manufacturers and glass suppliers were also in attendance.

## Glass

Instructor: Sally Scarlett  
Scarlett Glass  
Edinboro, PA  
[www.scarlettglass.com](http://www.scarlettglass.com)



Sally has recently concentrated her artistic efforts on experimentation with various ways to use pot melted glass. By creating custom designed pots and slumping molds, Sally creates work that is completely unique. Sally's Studio is located in Edinboro Pennsylvania.

## Glass

Instructor: Cass Zielinski  
Pittsburgh Glass Center  
Pittsburgh, PA  
[www.PittsburghGlassCenter.org](http://www.PittsburghGlassCenter.org)

### Blown Glass Garden Floats

In this 2-hour class you will make beautiful hand-blown glass floats to display in your garden or float on your pond. Work with an instructor to gather, color and blow a beautiful glass ball to either hang in your garden or float on a pond or birdbath.

### Pulled Glass Flowers

Come and join us to make your own colorful glass flower for display inside or out. Work with a variety of tools to color, shape and form bits of molten glass into a floral work of art.

## Weaving

Instructor: Ms. Jill Rouke  
Jill Rouke Handwovens, LLC  
Erie, PA  
[www.jillroukehandwovens.com](http://www.jillroukehandwovens.com)



**Jill Rouke** has been weaving for over 30 years and specializes in one of a kind handwoven art and accessories for men and women. She works in a variety of exotic natural fibers, including: tencel, silk, bamboo, soy silk and the new Sea Silk (70% silk/30% Sea Cell©). For many of her art and wearable art pieces Jill handpaints the warp fibers before she weaves. For some pieces she spins space-dyed silk fiber to use as a weft. Some are embellished with beads. Each piece is unique, completely handcrafted and hand-finished

**Artist's Statement:** "Weaving is a magical experience for me; I never tire of the thread by thread creation it allows, the moment by moment experience. I love combining color and pattern in ways that create depth and meaning. The surface design is apparent, but a river of changing color runs beneath it. A scarf, for example, should look **and** feel good for the wearer. My scarves come more 'alive' when worn. My work includes other magical elements--maybe a hidden Fibonacci sequence or words 'coded' into the pattern allowing the energy of those words to be incorporated into the weaving. As my relationship with weaving evolves it becomes more of a spiritual practice and this is translated into my work."

**Life Coach:** Jean Sun Shaw  
Life's Journey, LLC  
New York, NY  
[www.lifesjourney.net/](http://www.lifesjourney.net/)



JEAN SUN SHAW is founder and managing principal of **life's journey, LLC**. - a personal and professional development company providing coaching to individuals who are reinventing themselves.

Jean's early years were spent in Taipei, Bangkok and Manila; she has lived in the United States for over thirty years. Jean has had a successful professional experience in staff and line positions with multinationals in several industries: legal, commodities trading, management consulting, information systems, and financial services. In 1993, Jean returned to an early interest in counseling and subsequently founded **life's journey, LLC**. Jean is also a member of the International Coaching Federation.

Jean received an undergraduate degree in economics at Moravian College; an M.A. in International Relations at The Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver; and an M.A and Ed.M. In Psychological Counseling from Columbia University. She was a 2002 Fellow of the Asian Pacific American Women's Leadership Institute. She received post-graduate certification training at the College of Executive Coaching; and in Ontological Coaching with Newfield Network Inc.



## **Appendix B**

### **Evaluators of Glass, Fiber and Paint Products**

**Individual**

Mary Rehm  
 Dave Rehm  
 Mike Rehm  
 Joan Rehm  
 Jim Rehm  
 Tom Rehm  
 Barb Rehm  
 Meg Rehm  
 Tom Thewes  
 Deb Edwards  
 Charlie Edwards  
 Jane McConnell  
 Bob McConnell  
 Lucianno Boccucci  
 Amy Basic  
 Sharon DiMasi  
 Jill Rouke  
 Sally Scarlett  
 Tom Doner  
 Cass at PGC  
 Michele Vitali  
 Lynn Thewes  
 Cassie Thewes  
 Carrie Thewes  
 Carson Thewes

**Relationship**

Mother  
 Brother  
 Artist (and brother)  
 Sister  
 Brother  
 Artist (and brother)  
 Sister  
 Sister  
 Spouse  
 Friend  
 Friend  
 Artist (and friend)  
 Photographer (and friend)  
 Friend  
 Artist  
 Artist (and friend)  
 Weaver  
 Glass artist  
 Glass artist  
 Glass artist  
 Artist  
 Daughter in law  
 Granddaughter  
 Granddaughter  
 Grandson

## **Appendix C**

### **Proposal Paper**

## In Search of a Passion

**Name:** Theresa Thewes

**Submitted:** May 2010

**Project Type:** Develop a Skill/Talent - Envision a Future

### Section One

#### **Purpose and Description of Project**

According to Parnes (1991, p. 149), “One’s future – what *will* be – depends a great deal on what each individual *constructs* it to be.” This statement makes intellectual sense and I have lived my life around individuals who are adept at constructing their futures. While I can see others envision their futures, I am woefully inept at this task. There is evidence of this lack of ability to ‘envision’ in my failure to recall dreams, my lack of daydreaming and, until recently, a lack of angst relating to what comes next. In conjunction with this deficit, I am recognizing a failure to explore interests that might move me from logical thought patterns into more intuitive ones. For this project, I will work to build a bridge to my future. I will delve into artistic activities (working with glass and weaving) in order to engage my strong tactile preference as I grapple with the question “What comes next for me?” I plan to pursue activities that force me to look more inwardly (conferences, meditation and yoga). Finally, I plan to continue to read

and to deliberately focus the next few months on defining the start of a plan for the future. Near the end of the project, I will engage a career coach to help build a frame for achieving that plan.

### **Rationale for Selection**

In August of 2006 I served as faculty at a science education reform conference. The conference was a kick-off program for the *Science: It's Elementary* program which was funded by the Governor/Department of Education of Pennsylvania. At a closing reception I proposed the possibility of working with the organizers to help deliver the first year of the program to elementary teachers across the state of PA. In a rare last minute approval, the administration at my University agreed to release me for a year-long sabbatical leave. By early September I had rented an apartment in Pittsburgh (two hours south of my home) and began traveling around the state to provide training in inquiry instruction of science. By the end of the sabbatical, I had traveled nearly 9500 miles in the state and had helped to train more than 1400 teachers. In addition to challenges relating to travel, the year was difficult. My husband suffered a mild heart attack, two very close family members passed away and we lost our fourteen year old dog. The experience was hardly a typical sabbatical experience.

As I returned to teaching the following September it was difficult to regain my passion for teaching. A shift in University administration failed (in my eyes) to bring a primary focus on education. Thoughts of leaving the university began to

develop. Applications for other positions were submitted. In Spring of 2008 Dr. Mike Fox visited our campus to discuss creativity. I carried home a program flyer for the MS in Creative Studies and began classes in June of that year.

It quickly became apparent that there were facets of my personal creativity that had never been explored. As I traveled through the course work of the program I began to feel like I was inhaling deeply for the first time in a long time. The experiences began to expose and clarify a lost reservoir of creativity. Assessments indicate that I am highly creative and I can be characterized as an efficient innovator with an above mean score for sufficiency of originality. When these results are coupled with a FourSight classification of implementer, a preferred mode of problem solving emerges. When confronted with challenges, I quickly internalize key information, shift the components and readily develop a creative solution. To quote Dr. John Kaufmann (of Scholastic Testing Services, Inc. – who helped me to understand my TTCT scores) “It is likely that you are highly creative and simply recognize these characteristics as ‘that’s just me.’” Because I have a habit of easily finding creative solutions to challenges, it soon became obvious that the most difficult aspect of the master’s program would be to identify challenges with which to work.

Much of my course work began to circle around the one question for which I had no creative solution: “What comes next for me?” By using assorted resources [Bridge’s Transitions (2004); Bolles’ What Color is Your Parachute (2009); and Cameron’s Finding Water (2007)] I have been able to identify some key aspects of my next work. Work for CRS 635 Foundations of Creative

Learning led me to build a 'vision' statement that suggests that my next phase will involve working with a non-profit organization. Unfortunately, I have been unable to fine-tune that clear vision on the future.

That failure to fine-tune the vision has highlighted a key lack in my creative skill set. I agree with Parnes that in order to achieve a fulfilling future, I must first see it. At this point of recognizing/developing my creativity, I find it difficult to engage in envisioning a future. Personally, I find the *Ladder of Abstraction* or *Why? What's Stopping You?* tools to be very unproductive. I live my life in today. For as long as I can remember, I have paid very little heed to the future – and even less to the past; I am an expert in living in the moment. While I can plan tasks for the future, I expend virtually no energy in anticipation of how they will feel. I know that I will accept what comes and manage it in a reasonable fashion. While my education in science allows opportunity for hypothesis, that hypothesis must be based on experimentation and empirical data. It makes little sense to me to anticipate outcomes – I much prefer to analyze the results as they are collected.

I have reached a point in my life where it is time to shift to a new future. While the past few years have been enlightening; they have also been frustrating. I feel the discomfort of being in a place, and at a job where the passion has waned. I am ready to move to something new. With concentrated efforts (as detailed below), I hope that the product of this project will be an enhanced ability to envision that future.

As a result of engaging in this process I will:

- Use strong tactile preferences to learn key skills of weaving and hot glass;
- Learn to create intuitively in these media;
- Open myself to opportunity for self reflection through yoga and mediation
- Develop skills of intuitive problem solving (to complement strong logical problem solving skills);
- Build a clear vision of a Passion that will guide a shift to a more fulfilling life's goal; to identify "Where the Universe will take me."

## **Section Two**

### **Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:**

Resources will focus on several different facets of creativity. These facets will include: Meditation to build introspective and visioning skills; information on Self-Actualization; and information on the skills of working with Hot Glass and Fibers.

Pertinent resources in these categories include:

#### **Meditation and Introspection:**

Goldman, J. (2008). *The 7 secrets of sound healing*. Carlsbad, CA: Hayhouse, Inc.



Lang, D. (2004). *Opening to meditation: A gentle, guided approach*. Novato, CA: New World Library.

Parnes, S. J. (1997). *Optimize the magic of your mind*. Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Rehm, Susannah. Practitioner of Kabala and Formal Buddhist Meditations, Sedona. AZ.

Creative Problem Solving Institute Conference, June 21-26,2010. Buffalo, NY.

#### Self-Actualization and Change of Career:

Sun-Shaw, Jean. Life Coach. life's journey, LLC. New York, NY.

Bolles, R. N. (2009). *What color is your parachute? 2009: A practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Bridges, W. (2004). *Transitions: Making sense of life's changes* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.

Davis, G. A. (2004). *Creativity is forever*, (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Maslow, A. H. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.

Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Harper and Row.

Expert-2-Expert Conference, May 19, 2010. Buffalo, NY.

Fiber Arts and Glass Working:

Cacchione, Z. Glass Artist. *Interglasstic Studios*, Erie, PA.

*Corning Museum of Glass*, Corning, NY.

Doner, T. Glass Artist. *Glass Blowing Center*, Hilliards, PA.

Kerss, T. Fabric Artist. *Edinboro University*, Edinboro, PA.

Murphy, M. Fabric Artist. Meadville, PA.

*Pittsburgh Glass Center*, Pittsburgh, PA

Rouke, J. Fabric Artist. McKean, PA

Bray, C. (2001), *Dictionary of glass: Materials and techniques* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).

Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Chandler, D. (2009). *Learning to weave* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Loveland, CO: Interweave Press.

### **Section Three**

#### **How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?**

As indicated above, the goal of the master's project is to define the direction of my next 'career.' I have started this project by reading Parnes' *Optimize the Magic of Your Mind*. I used this classic introduction to creative problem solving as a guide to identify key facets of the project. As I expanded on the problem statement "What challenges are important to clarifying my future?" key criteria appeared. These included a clarity that I am looking for a passion (that may be a tactile creative talent), that this search is leading towards self-actualization and growth (which will require introspection) and a deep belief that I already know what this choice is – it is inevitable that I will uncover it. I am confident that my next job/journey/talent will move me to a joyful, full life of service. My core challenge in this project is to train myself to be more receptive to understanding and identifying where "the Universe plans to take me." In order to define the future, I intend to learn some skills of introspection (through meditation and yoga).

I have very few strong preferences (as assessed in CRS 580 Creativity Assessment). The strongest, by far, is tactile. I have begun to explore this preference. I have intentionally filled my hands with different textures, weights, shapes, angles, sounds and meanings. An eighth of my desk top is now filled with beads, crystals, snowflakes, hearts, pine cones, shells and baskets. I sew. I've constructed my first collage since grade school (Figure 1A: Happy Day

2009). I've taken drawing classes (Figure 2A: Lincoln Log Perspective). I'm buying and stringing beads (Figure 3A: Beads). Intuition guides what I make. As I play with materials, I watch for changes in my creative thought. A seven museum tour of Washington, DC (in 2 days) shifted my creative product (Figure 4A: Beads 2).

During this project I will work with glass and fiber. Both media have long-fascinated me. I love the play of light on glass; I love the rasp of fabric in my hands. As I learn a bit of the mechanics of working with looms and torches, I will pay heed to Runco's emphasis on mindfulness (2007) as I work towards seeing a clear vision of my next option.

I am an introvert. That means that I'm very happy with empty ears. I prefer quiet. I also want to help people to collaborate. To better bridge the two, I will work with others to investigate possibilities. Tari Keress, a fiber artist at my University showed me basics of the loom. I have scheduled weaving lessons with Jill Rouke and Matilda Murphy, local fiber artists. I have scheduled first lessons with glass artists in the area – Tom Doner of Hillards, PA; Zach Chaccione of Erie, PA and Sally Scarlett of Edinboro, PA. A possibility of bench space rental exists. I plan to attend sessions at both the Expert2Expert and CPSI conferences to be held in Buffalo this summer. I am optimistic that interacting with others as I learn creative, tactile arts will help me to process the information of my future more intuitively. Finally, I will contact a life coach Jean Sun Shaw (life's journey, LLC) for discussions on planning for the future.

## Project Timeline

5/1-7/1	Artist's Dates	14 hours
5/10-7/15	Investigating Glass	50 hours
5/10-7/15	Investigating Weaving	40 hours
5/19	Expert2Expert conference	48 hours
6/20-25	CPSI conference	60 hours
5/1-7/1	Meditation	30 hours
6/7	Status update/Dr. Puccio	
6/10-7/10	Life coach	40 hours
7/15-7/30	Project Write-Up	40 hours
	TOTAL Estimate	320 hours

The time spent in classes and at the torch/loom for the glass and weaving is, at best, estimated. I fully expect each of the artist's dates to last for more than two hours. I'm hoping to become successful at some sort of introspective meditation. The time estimate indicates a willingness to pursue this avenue for at least the duration of the project.

### **Section Four**

#### **What Will be the Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes?**

- I will create some original glass and fabric art pieces.
- I will learn key skills of meditation and stretching.
- I will know what next career to plan for.

### **Section Five**

#### **Personal Learning Goals:**

- To learn basics of working with glass and with fabric.
- To better express creativity in artistic product.
- To become more sensitive to intuition.
- To enhance visioning skills.

#### **Criteria To Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement?**

- Satisfaction with creative product
- Articulation of the impact of tactile creativity on an ability to envision
- Presence of a plan for the future

#### **Evaluation:**

- Monitor personal satisfaction with learning.
- Monitor personal satisfaction with growth.
- Present artwork for evaluation.
- Ask life coach to assess progress.

## **Section Six**

### **Bibliography:**

Bolles, R. N. (2009). *What color is your parachute? 2009: A practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Bridges, W. (2004). *Transitions: Making sense of life's changes* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.

Cameron, J. *Finding water: The art of perseverance*. In Cameron, J. (2007). *The Complete Artist's Way: Creativity as a spiritual practice*. London, England: Penguin Books.

Parnes, S. J. (1997). *Optimize the magic of your mind*. Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Runco, M. A. (2007). *Creativity theories and themes: Research, development and practice*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier Academic Press.

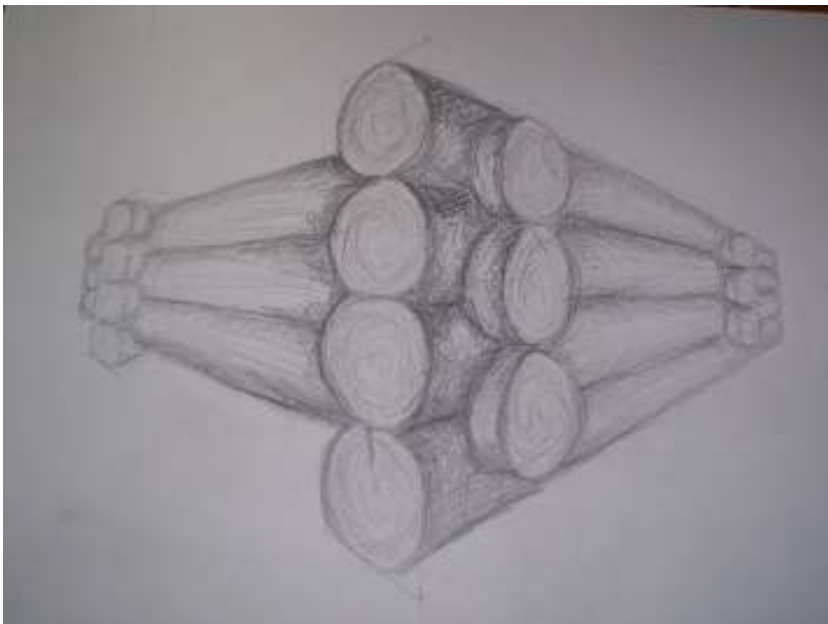
## Appendix

## Figures

*Figure 1A.* Happy Day



*Figure 2A:* Lincoln Log Perspective Study





*Figure 3A: Beads*



*Figure 4A: Beads 2*

